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23

# Annual Report

**Innovate | Connect | Strength**

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## Mission

To improve the wellbeing of those affected by hearing loss.

## Our Vision

A community where we can **hear**,  
be **heard** and **thrive**.

### Our Values

Respect  
Volunteerism  
Teamwork Empathy  
Nonprofit Integrity  
Partnership  
Collaboration  
Inclusiveness

### Guiding Principles

Accessibility  
Empowerment  
Sharing  
Knowledge

## Our Ultimate Impact

Hear Quebec has embarked on a journey to deepen social inclusion, accessibility and opportunities for people with hearing loss residing in the Greater Montreal area. The cornerstone of our organization lies in the condition we've pinpointed for success.



**Making the most of  
the hearing we have  
since 1979.**





# Chairman of the Board of Directors

By: Dale Bonnycastle



In June 2023, I stepped back into the role of president. I would like to begin by thanking our former president, Samir Badran, for his leadership and devotion to our mission. This past year, we welcomed two new board members, Salvatore Castellano and Emily Ranger - Lepage. It is an honor to be board president, and I feel humbled and inspired to be in this position.

I am thrilled and proud of this year's progress, marked by positive change and **innovation**. New funding enabled the creation of the Include **ME** and Consult **ME** programs, which align perfectly with our Theory of Change. They allow us to **innovate**, **connect**, and **strengthen** our impact by prioritizing accessibility and inclusivity.

I want to acknowledge and thank our hard working Executive Director and staff who bring dedication, skills, intelligence, and passion to their work. They go above and beyond to fulfill Hear Quebec's mission. This work would not have been possible without the dedication and hard work of all of our volunteers, accessibility ambassadors, and peer mentors. They are a precious resource and their contribution to the mission is invaluable.

We deeply appreciate all the financial support from donors, partners, sponsors and our grant sources. With your support, our members thrive with programs that promote social inclusion, access to resources, and accessibility that keeps them **connected**.

I also want to thank the board members for their ongoing support and contributions. This year, our board members held a total of 11 virtual or in person meetings and 2 training sessions contributing to the organization's development. They have worked hard on developing their fundraising skills, governance, monitoring financial operations and overseeing policy development.

Our future holds promise and challenges. While the new **innovative** programs **connect** our community to the accessibility essentials, there is a lot of work that remains to be done. Many sectors of the population continue to lack hearing health care and the support they require and deserve.

As we go forward into our 45th year of existence, we look back with much gratitude to all those who have supported us, and we look forward to continued growth and progress for the members of our community.



**Dale Bonnycastle**  
President | Public Sector



**Salvatore Castellano**  
Vice President |  
Community Member



**Connor Quinn**  
Treasurer | Community  
Member



**Ashley Mayoff**  
Board Secretary |  
Young Adult Director |  
Community Member



**Emily Ranger - Lepage**  
Chairman of Fundraising |  
4 Private Sector



**Annette Perry**  
Director | Community Member



**Sudeep Mathew**  
Director | Private Sector



**Heidi Wager**  
Executive Director |  
Employee



# Executive Director Report

By: Heidy Wager



Over the past year, Hear Quebec has experienced significant growth and progress. We have secured new funding, expanded our team, launched four **innovative** programs, and increased our support base. These achievements have positioned us to better serve and **connect** to our community and advance our mission.

We have been actively putting our Theory of Change into practice, using it as our guide to enhance social inclusion, accessibility, and opportunities for individuals with hearing loss in the Greater Montreal Area. Our focus has been on implementing a peer-centered approach, fostering strategic partnerships, and championing inclusivity. Our initiatives have been geared towards improving accessibility, offering credible information and referrals, and involving our community in peer-centered activities.

As you explore the reports from each department, you will see how these efforts have translated into tangible impacts and outcomes. This year marks the conclusion of our two-year action plan. We are dedicated to evaluating and enhancing our strategies to ensure continued effectiveness.

Grounded in the motto “nothing about us without us,” we remain steadfast in our commitment to achieving our goals. Through **innovation**, **connection**, and **strengthening** our community, we prioritize inclusion, participation, and collaboration.

This year, we are thrilled to have initiated a collaboration on a research project with Dr. Laura Copeman of Concordia University. Our focus is

on investigating the impacts of our initiatives, particularly within the Include **ME** program in partnership with **Lethbridge-Layton-Mackay Rehabilitation Center**.

Research projects are incredibly valuable for nonprofits, but they’re not always easy to come by. They provide opportunities to leverage resources and expertise, capabilities to deepen understanding and maximize impact. Such partnerships enable nonprofits to precisely refine and validate their approaches, thus enhancing their effectiveness in serving their communities.

**We extend our deepest gratitude to all our supporters:** funders, donors, partners, and volunteers. Your contributions are indispensable to our success, enabling “ us to grow, expand,

**Your contributions are indispensable to our success, enabling us to grow, expand, and extend our reach into new territories.**

and extend our reach into new territories. As we start to celebrate our remarkable 45th year, we are excited to commemorate these achievements and more with you in 2024-2025.

# Membership

By: Chandravathana Ilanthirayan



“

Hear Quebec is more than just an organization to provide resources and support... It also sponsors events and gatherings so that members can socialize with one another; share stories, experiences, and even frustrations related to our hearing loss. I have made a whole set of new friends, and we share a special bond.

”



**M**embership is the lifeblood of Hear Quebec, crucial for our sustainability and growth. After two challenging post-COVID years with low membership rates, 2023 marked a turning point. Since then, we have successfully increased and sustained our membership, providing a **stronger** foundation for our programs. This renewed **strength** empowers us to **innovate**, expand our reach, and better serve those affected by hearing loss in the Greater Montreal Area.

We recognize that many of our subscribers and social media followers have been affected by hearing loss or are interested in engaging with and supporting our mission. Even though they are not members by definition, they are non-members who are integral to our community and mission. In aiming to offer a more inclusive membership model, we are currently exploring a restructuring process.

## Renewal and Retention Rates of Membership

Over the past twelve months, our membership surged to 241 individual members and 10 professional/organizational members, a 32.6% increase from the previous year.

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This growth reflects our commitment to fostering inclusivity and engagement. Our professional and organizational partnerships enhanced the resources we shared with our members and enabled our partners to reach our members with their services.

Despite challenges in renewal rates from 2020 to 2022, we enhanced the membership experience by implementing simplified prefilled renewal forms and periodic reminders. This improved process, combined with our programs, updated resources, and research efforts, contributed to a **27% increase in renewals** in 2023. Furthermore, we actively supported members in attaining their accessibility discounts from their network providers, ensuring a more comprehensive and beneficial membership experience.

Over the past year, our organization has seen a consistent rise in subscribers and followers across our website and social media platforms, averaging an impressive increase of 15% annually. This growth highlights the effectiveness of our diverse engagement efforts, including various programs and compelling content.

### Structure or Model of Memberships

To address the evolving needs and preferences of our members, we are revamping our membership model. This strategic move is driven by our dedication to **innovation**, building **stronger** relationships, and forging deeper **connections** with our members. As part of this effort, we are leveraging the capabilities of our CRM (Customer Relationship Management) system to enhance the membership subscription and renewal process. This

allows us to streamline operations, personalize interactions, and provide a more efficient and user-friendly experience for our members.

Our diverse programs, **innovative** initiatives, and updated content have driven positive outcomes. Hear Quebec remains committed to alleviating the impact of hearing loss by creating accessible environments and **connecting** individuals to supportive communities, ensuring no one faces these challenges alone. Our programs run weekdays from 9 AM to 5 PM, with evening and weekend events for broader accessibility. Primarily located in southwest Montreal, we reflect the local community's demographics and, as the only English-speaking non-profit in Quebec supporting those affected by hearing loss, we maintain an open-door policy for all.





# Volunteers

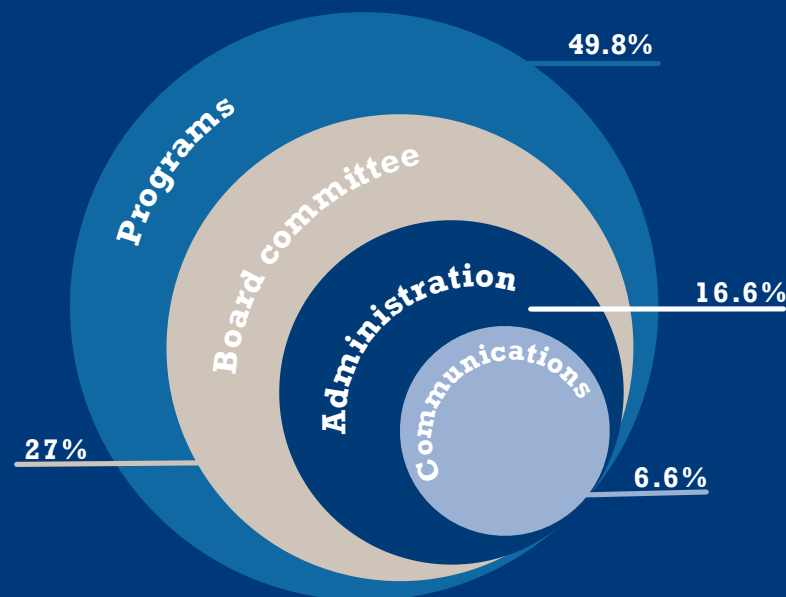


**V**olunteers serve as the backbone of Hear Québec, embodying the spirit of innovation, strength, and connection in our organization. Rooted in the principle of “nothing about us without us,” our volunteers, including many with lived experience of hearing loss, are integral to shaping and advancing our mission.

Our commitment to inclusivity is exemplified by our board of directors, where 50 plus percent of directors on our board are representative of individuals affected by hearing loss. Their invaluable insights and guidance inform our strategic decisions, ensuring our initiatives align with the needs of our community. This past year, our eight board members contributed 567 hours of support through board activities and various committees, accounting for 27% of the total volunteer hours. Their dedication highlights the strong leadership driving our mission forward. Additionally, our committees welcome participation from members-at-large, fostering a collaborative environment where diverse perspectives contribute to a meaningful and democratic process.

Moreover, our volunteer program extends beyond those directly impacted by hearing loss, welcoming students and stagiaires who contribute their time and talents to various tasks. 23 of our volunteers dedicated 349 hours (16.6% of total hours) to administrative support, 1,046 hours (49.8%) to programs and research, and 56 hours (6.6%) to communications. Through these experiences, volunteers gain a deeper understanding of hearing loss and emerge as allies and change-makers within our community.

This past year, our volunteers demonstrated their unwavering commitment to our cause by dedicating over 2,100 hours of their time. Through our new “Include **ME** at Home” initiative, volunteers served as Accessibility Ambassadors (AA), providing 260 hours of crucial one-on-one technical support to individuals with hearing loss in the comfort of their homes. They helped members navigate their new Assistive Listening Devices provided by RAMQ, enhancing accessibility and fostering connections. Additionally, 6 peer mentors contributed 100 hours of support to 9 mentees, offering personalized guidance and encouragement to our members. Through these mentoring relationships, individuals are equipped to overcome the challenges posed by hearing impairments. This emphasizes the invaluable contributions made by our Peer Mentors and Accessibility Ambassadors as enabled volunteers who give back to their community.



**The graph indicates a total of 2100 hours of volunteering divided by the different areas of work. Thank you to our 24 volunteers that supported us in 2023!**

# Awards & Scholarship

Each year, Hear Québec acknowledges individuals who've contributed significantly to supporting people with hearing loss. Our selection committee picks honorees from our members, volunteers, hearing health pros, and the wider community; this highlights our commitment to teamwork and cooperation. We value their joint efforts; they're crucial to our mission of bettering the lives of those with hearing loss. Join us in celebrating the 2023 winners, we're thrilled to announce them!

**The Doreen Cons Spirit Award** was created in our former President's name to recognize her outstanding devotion and dedication to improving the lives of people affected by hearing loss. This year's recipient is **Tirza Peterson**.



**The Golden Ear Award** is given to a Hearing Health Professional who has supported those affected by hearing loss and shown great support for Hear Québec and its mission. Collaborating with hearing health professionals is vital to our success because we share the same goals. This year's recipient is **Sylvie Auger**.



**The HearHear Membership Award** is presented to a Hear Québec member whose participation in and support of the organization or other members has gone above and beyond expectations. This year's recipient is **Margaret Wallace**.



**The Hearing Hear'Os Award** is presented to an organization, professional or company to acknowledge their outstanding collaboration and impact they had on assisting Hear Québec achieve its mission and vision. This year's recipient is **Dominique Godin**.



**The Bonnycastle Scholarship & Bursary Fund** was created to celebrate our 40th anniversary. The fund is intended to promote accessibility and equal opportunities in our community. The first-ever recipient of this bursary is **Overture With The Arts**.



We deeply appreciate the collaborative efforts and partnerships of all who actively join us in our mission to enhance the well-being of individuals living with hearing loss.





# Programs & Services

By: Faith Gould &  
Layne Turner



**I**n 2023-2024, Hear Quebec received significant funding to develop the Accessibility and Awareness programs. During this development phase, we were able to maintain our Support and Resources and Referrals programming. However we knew that these areas deserved to thrive with the addition of a dedicated staff person. In January 2024, we welcomed Faith Gould as Programs coordinator to oversee all Support and Resources and Referrals programs, while Layne Turner shifted her role to Accessibility Coordinator and now focuses on the

Include **ME** and Consult **ME** projects. What a difference this increased capacity has made! We have expanded our services and seen registration and attendance in our activities double in the last quarter. We have resumed our outreach activities, which has notably increased our reach in the community. Our accessibility projects are currently being scaled up, and we have already seen revenue from our consultation service. See each section to see what we have done in detail.



**W**e're committed to helping members experiencing isolation and breaking down the stigma surrounding hearing loss by providing peer-centered support programs and groups and encouraging connections through supportive communities.

This year, we offered support programs totaling **471 hours of support—an increase of 15%** compared to last year. We hosted a total of **50 group sessions**, providing **358 hours of support** to our members, and delivered **over 100 hours of peer mentoring**. Additionally, we introduced **two new initiatives**: Thorns N' Roses and Exceptional Lunch League.

## **In 2023-2024, our support programs included:**

### **Daytime coffee breaks**

We hosted **32 supportive group sessions** for seniors with hearing loss, totaling **185.5 hours of support received**.

COVID presented challenges for members joining online or in person, but they still craved community.

To address this, we introduced hybrid options for our winter coffee breaks, allowing remote or in-person participation for the first time. Despite initial hurdles, collaboration with Layton-Lethbridge-Mackay Rehabilitation Centre's staff led to increased attendance and participation.

### **Thorns N' Roses Cochlear Implant Group**

In response to Montreal's cochlear implant surgeries, we initiated a virtual peer-led support group for new recipients, those awaiting surgery, and long-time users. **Over 7 sessions** in Fall 2023 and Winter 2024, **22 attendees shared experiences and provided support, totaling 23 hours received**. This sharing fosters insights, emotional support, and solidarity, aiding adjustment to life with a cochlear implant.



### **Exceptional Lunch League**

Our monthly gatherings, in collaboration with the Sarto-Desnoyers community center in Dorval, provide a space for members with hearing loss to **connect** socially and engage with their community. Across **5 sessions**, totaling **78 hours to our** members share experiences, build friendships, and support one another in an inclusive environment. This initiative not only **connects** individuals facing similar challenges but also fosters a vibrant, accessible social network within the Dorval community.

### **Peer Mentoring**

Pairing members with hearing loss with trained mentors, our dedicated mentors collectively provided over **100 hours of personalized one-on-one support**, guidance, and encouragement throughout their hearing journey. Although the partnership with Audition Quebec concluded in 2023-2024, our mentors continued to offer one-on-one support to members. Transitioning to become ambassadors in another program, four mentors extended their impact. Despite the decrease in pairs from 9 to 4 as mentees achieved goals, our program ensures positive outcomes. In the new year, we'll explore new recruitment efforts, along with developing a youth-driven peer mentoring program in partnership with Montreal Oral School for the Deaf.



### **Cocktail evenings**

We organized 6 Cocktail Evenings, totaling **53.5 hours received**, for our young members unable to attend daytime activities. These events, featuring activities like Shakespeare in the Park and movie nights, provide a social setting for youth aged **16-30** to **connect**. While engaging youth has presented challenges over the years, we're committed to meeting the diverse needs of all members.

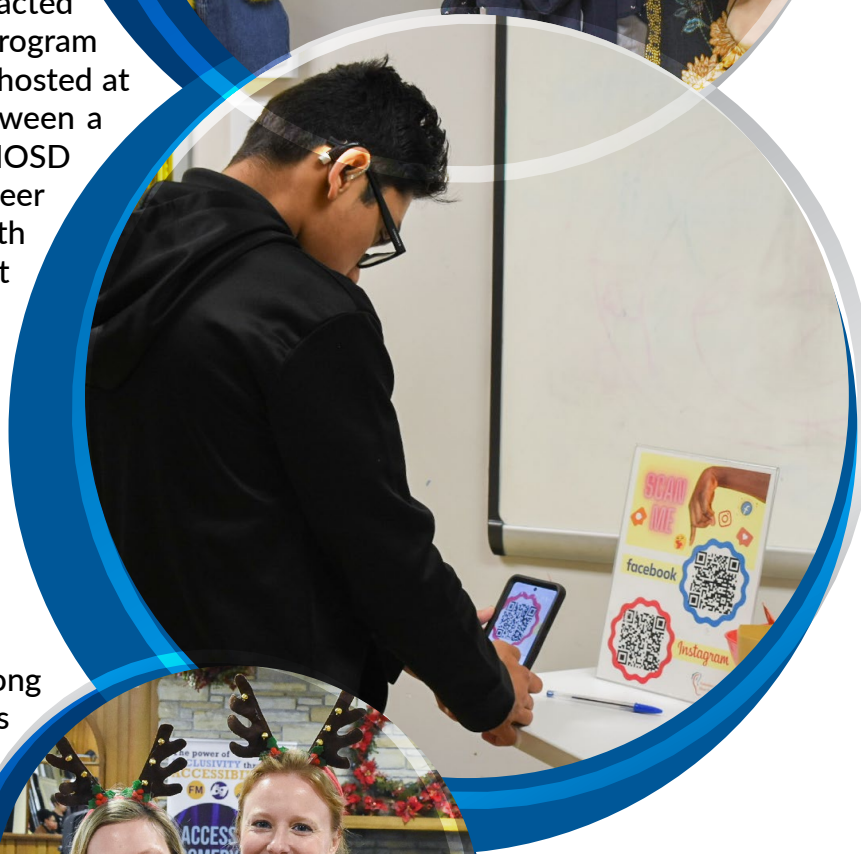


Recognizing the importance of dedicated social spaces for youth with hearing loss, we introduced Cocktail Evenings. As a representative of the young adult community, I focus on enhancing youth programs while ensuring support for older members.

### Developing a youth program in collaboration with MOSD

Montreal Oral School for the Deaf (**MOSD**) and Hear Quebec have collaborated closely to bridge the gap in support and community between MOSD's youth and working adults. This year our first Intergenerational Holiday Brunch Event featured a talent show by youth, fostering **connections** across generations. Additionally, a "Hard-of-Hearing Mama" workshop led by a MOSD alumni attracted parents of children with hearing loss to our program for the first time. At our Access Comedy show, hosted at MOSD, **20 participants** enjoyed interaction between a young adult comedian with hearing loss and MOSD teenagers, inspiring our idea for a youth peer mentoring program. Despite challenges with member engagement, our Intergenerational Paint Night at Hear Quebec saw great participation from **15 MOSD youth and parents**. Looking ahead, we plan to expand our youth programs by tailoring our Cocktail Evening activities for individuals **aged 16-30** and developing a youth peer mentorship program in collaboration with Montreal Oral School for the Deaf, universities, CEGEPs, youth-driven organizations for hearing loss, and Tranxition.

Through diverse support programs, we build a strong community, fostering meaningful relationships among members. This boosts engagement and expands their support network. Our group sessions, personalized assistance, and social gatherings inspire active involvement in community events, fostering a sense of belonging. As we grow, we prioritize hybrid accessibility, inclusivity across age groups, youth engagement, and partnerships for collaborative efforts.





# Resource & Referral

By: Faith Gould

We have been providing resources and referrals for the past 45 years. However, a few years ago, we officially included these services in our programs, and began a tracking system to help us understand their impacts. Since then, we have further expanded our services and impact, this year alone yielding **132 hours of resources and referrals** and **16 hours of information**, an **increase of 116%** from last year's numbers.

We have developed four main courses of action to provide these services:

## 1. Inbound Request

Last year, we had three categories of inbound requests: Accessibility, Resources & Referrals, and Support. Due to an increase in requests and additional staffing, we have added 3 more: **Financial Programs**, **Community Outreach**, and **"Other"** to our list of categories

Presently, our inbound requests fall into 6 categories:

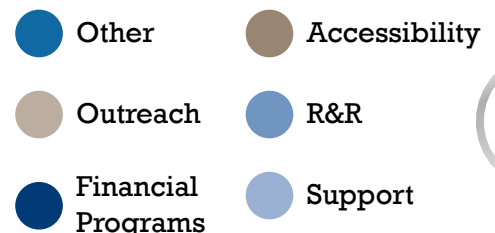
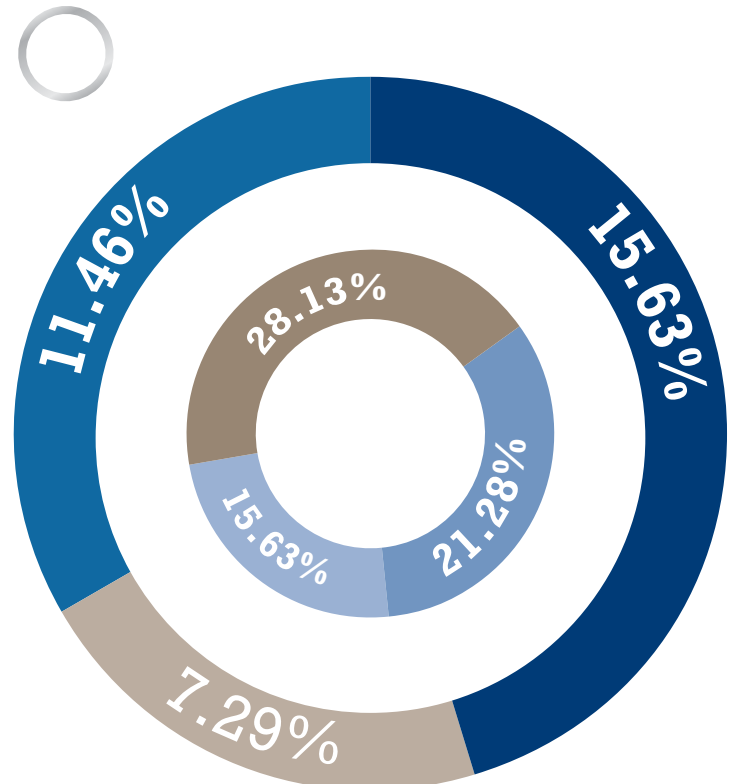
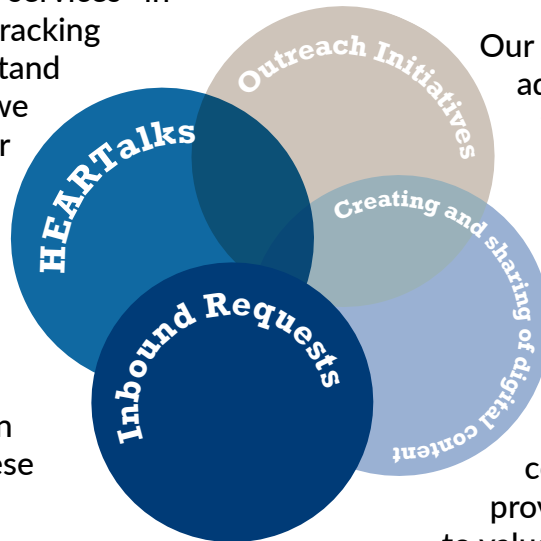
1. **Accessibility:** Information on assistive listening devices and accessibility measures.
2. **Resources and Referrals:** Information on where to seek hearing health care.
3. **Support:** Information on what Hear Quebec can do to help
4. **Financial programs:** Financial information for people with hearing loss, including the RAMQ hearing device program and device donations.
5. **Community Outreach:** Presentations and fundraising opportunities.
6. **Other:** Volunteering, articles, job resources, technical resources.

We have seen a **28% increase compared to last year** in inbound requests totalling 96 inquiries. As well, we have dedicated **over 24 hours** to providing personalized **1-on-1 support** over phone, by email, and in person, resulting in a **28% uptake in**

**membership, among 54 non-members** who received assistance, thereby mitigating their isolation.

## 2. HEARTalks

Our new Programs Coordinator allocated additional time and resources to focusing on our **HEARTalks**. This resulted in tripling the attendance at our most recent talk around disability tax credits. For the first time this year, we were able to offer these talks in a hybrid format, increasing both social engagement and accessibility. Overall, the **support hours increased by 114%** compared to the previous year, thus providing even more individuals access to valuable information.





### 3. Outreach Initiatives

Despite initial constraints, our reintroduced outreach efforts in the final quarter of the year yielded positive results. With 16 hours dedicated to direct community engagement, we raised awareness of our services, leading to increased volunteer sign-ups, new memberships, and donations. Our participation in five outreach events increased awareness of our initiatives, highlighted support for isolated individuals, and identified partnership opportunities. Active engagement in key meetings further facilitated resource exchange and networking.

### 4. Creating and Sharing of Digital Content

Creating and sharing of digital content is one of the main courses of action that we still need to develop. However, in the past year, we have published 12 new articles related to topics in hearing loss and leveraged social media to direct traffic to our website, where all resources are accessible. Moving forward, close collaboration between our programs and communications teams will be useful to develop the best possible way to receive this information that makes sense for our membership. Our aim for the coming year is to create more articles addressing community-identified priorities and meeting their evolving needs.

This year, we have observed an uptick in the number of individuals accessing information and resources from us, leading to notable benefits such as financial disability savings during times of financial strain, expedited access to hearing tests/resources, and the ability of our members to make more informed decisions. As a result, they find themselves connected to the community, thereby strengthening the support they receive and increasing their autonomy.



**Hear Quebec is one of these organizations that understands and brings people back into society who had once felt left out.**

**-Shirley Holdbrook, Member**

What a year for our Awareness and Accessibility programs! Through the successful application to the Government of Canada's Community Services Recovery Fund (CSRF) and the municipal grant Le Fonds dédié aux projets de développement d'expertise et de renforcement de capacités en accessibilité universelle (FDDPAU), we have secured vital funding for our two new **innovative** projects: Include **ME** at Home and Consult **ME**.

These programs address the accessibility needs of the estimated **60% of Canadians with hearing health issues**. Our goal is to make spaces more accessible for people with hearing loss.

### Include **ME** at Home

During the pandemic, when the healthcare system was under intense pressure, we learned that hearing healthcare was not prioritized, reducing accessibility for our community. With our understanding of how community health workers have been used in other situations to bridge gaps, we **innovated** and developed a peer-centered program to support people at home with their assistive listening devices: Include **ME** at home.

For this project we **strengthened** our targeted partnership with **Lethbridge-Layton-Mackay Rehabilitation Center** and worked very closely with their Service-Aides-Techniques department, which distributes RAMQ covered assistive listening devices. Their staff provided equipment and spent over 10 hours training and supporting us on how to use the most commonly distributed amplified telephone and television devices.

We applied this knowledge in developing a training program, with the additional expertise from a social worker and teacher of the deaf (who both have hearing loss themselves) who volunteered their time in creating content for an **80-page training manual**. The training includes not only technical skills but also teaches our volunteers empathy and compassion as well as important safety measures such as Text 911 and registering with municipal emergency services. From our membership, we recruited **6 Accessibility Ambassadors** and provided them with the training and support they needed to fulfill their role.

Since November 2023, our ambassadors have helped **77 individuals with their devices**. This includes **132 telephone support calls** and **24 home visits**. Through

## Awareness & Accessibility

By: Layne Turner



this **connection** in the community, we have seen that **96% of people who have requested this service are successfully using their devices**. In addition, all participants received valuable safety information, such as information on how to register for the emergency evacuation assistance program and Text 911 for mobile users. These services increase safety for people with hearing loss.

Next year, in collaboration with Concordia University, we'll publish research findings and scale the project. In 2024-2025, we'll launch Include **ME** in Residence in three senior residences, empowering residents to support each other for increased accessibility. Through targeted partnerships, trained volunteer ambassadors will offer advice and guidance on hearing health needs. L'année prochaine, en collaboration avec l'Université Concordia, nous publierons les résultats de la recherche et mettrons le projet à l'échelle. En 2024-2025, nous lancerons Include MOI in Residence dans trois résidences pour personnes âgées, afin de permettre aux résidents de s'entraider pour améliorer l'accessibilité. Grâce à des partenariats ciblés, des ambassadeurs bénévoles formés offriront des conseils et une orientation sur les besoins en matière de santé auditive.



**"Andrea was an angel in disguise! Apparently, something was not connected with the phone, and she fixed it. She was a blessing!" - RW**





## New Consult **ME**

**T**hrough our theory of change, we have worked with multiple stakeholders and learned that many organizations face barriers to offering hearing accessibility in arts and culture. This includes a lack of knowledge on the needs of people with hearing loss and being unaware of how to use existing technology or how to engage with the hearing loss community altogether. In response, we have developed an **innovative** consultation service and toolkit to ensure that event planners and decision-makers have the knowledge, guidance and coaching on hearing loss and accessibility measures.

The toolkit was developed in collaboration with La Maison de la Culture Janine Sutto to be used by the city of Montreal's network of maison de la Cultures, potentially **increasing hearing accessibility for over 100,000 people**. Organizations will now be able to make the **connection** between hearing loss, communication styles and how to implement appropriate accessibility measures by using the following resources we have developed:

- A toolkit that includes **10 bilingual and accessible videos** that educate on hearing loss and the types of accessibility measures, as well as **8 tipsheets** on those measures and how to implement them.
- **Experiential learning tools** that include a needs assessment, an

event decision matrix, and an accessibility action plan template.

- **Coaching tools** to help the organization implement accessibility at an event and learn from the process.
- Sustainability tools to allow organizations to plan for and measure long-term hearing accessibility with short, medium and long term outcomes and indicators to evaluate success.

We **strengthened** our presence in the community and made **8 events and activities more accessible** to people with hearing loss:

- In 2023-2024, we began working with two organizations that are receiving the complete Consult **ME** service: la Maison de la Culture







Janine-Sutto and Overture with the Arts. This has the potential to **reach over 10000 people**.

- We partnered with **ZOO FEST** to co-produce a hearing-accessible show which included live captions, sign language interpretation, a hearing loop and a digital modulation system. This partnership led to a presentation at **Société de développement des entreprises culturelles (SODEC)** to talk about hearing accessibility in arts and culture (by all Montreal festival decision makers.)
- We supported accessibility at **OFFJFL** by lending our digital modulation system for **three shows at Le Balcon**. We also advised their communications department on how to promote hearing accessibility on their social media.
- For a second year, we brought our FM system to **Repercussion Theatre's Shakespeare in the Park** and advised their communications department on how to promote hearing accessibility on their social media. Members of **Hear Quebec** and **Tranxition from LLM** attended the event.
- We supported **McGill's Community for Lifelong Learning** in its quest to find new sound augmentation technology and attended its moderator orientation to advise on how to be more hearing accessible during their class sessions.

We have been working with Innoweave on impact measurement to fully demonstrate the scope of this service's impact. In 2024-2025, we will officially launch this bilingual service with a sliding-scale fee structure to allow this service to become a sustainable revenue stream.

**"Hear Quebec has been an invaluable partner in our journey towards accessibility at the McGill Community for Lifelong Learning. Their dedication to enhancing hearing accessibility through resources like assistive listening technology and insightful presentations has been transformative. Thanks to Hear Quebec, our classrooms are now more hearing accessible, ensuring that everyone can fully participate and engage in the learning experience."**

**-Zoe Chiu, McGill Community for Lifelong Learning.**

# Communications

By: Alex R. Ehlers



## Top 5 Most visited Webpages



After 2022 being a year of assessment, 2023 was the year of getting hands on **connecting** the communication channels, our community and Hear Quebec's most important priorities: membership & revenue increase.

In 2023, our communications department updated the content on 60% of our website pages using Google Keywords to improve our Search Engine Optimization (SEO) scores. This means that our website is now more likely to appear in search results when people use common search terms on Google. As a result, more people are finding our site naturally, this is called organic reach, which means that our website, and therefore Hear Quebec, is being found without needing to pay for advertising. This increased by **10.01% compared to 2022**. For 2024, we aim to update the rest of our webpages to continue expanding our reach.

There are other ways people find our website. One significant method is direct entry, where users go directly to [www.hearhear.org](http://www.hearhear.org) without using a search engine like google. This accounted for **47.33% of our sessions**. Additionally, **6.67% of our sessions came from organic social reach**, which means users found our website through unpaid posts on social media platforms. In total, we had **8,551 users**, new users (4259) and returning users (4292) on our website, with **38.59% coming from organic reach, 47.33% from direct entry, and 6.67% from organic social reach**.

Additional to our website improvements, we've also been actively engaging on social media. This year, **we posted 169 pieces of content** on our social media platforms (Facebook & Instagram). As a result, we saw a **16.4% increase in Facebook visits**. Our **general content interactions**, such as likes, comments, and shares, **went up by 79.1%**. Furthermore, we had **166 direct clicks to our links shared through Facebook**, driving more traffic to our website.

On Instagram, out of a **total reach of 2,780**, we achieved **2,354 organic reaches**. Organic reach refers to the number of people who saw our posts without any paid promotion, meaning these views were gained through our regular posts and interactions. The use of hashtags significantly helped us reach other accounts organically. Our **content interactions on Instagram counted 634**, and we had a total of **874 profile visits** this year.



This year we observed a notable shift in the demographic composition of our social media followers. We saw an increase in the percentage of women aged 25-34, rising from 19.7% to 21.4%. Furthermore, the percentage of individuals aged 55-64 increased from 4.4% to 7.9% among women. For individuals aged 65 and above, we saw a significant increase as well. Last year, women represented 4.4% and men 2.7% of this demographic, whereas this year, the numbers rose to 9.4% for women and 6.7% for men. Understanding these demographic shifts is key as it enables us to tailor our content more effectively to our digital community but also, this data allows our programs team to better target the audiences they tailor their programs for, ensuring maximum impact and relevance.

Moreover, these demographic insights provide valuable information to our sponsors and advertisers. By understanding the composition of our audience, they can create content that resonates with our followers, thereby increasing engagement with their services and businesses.

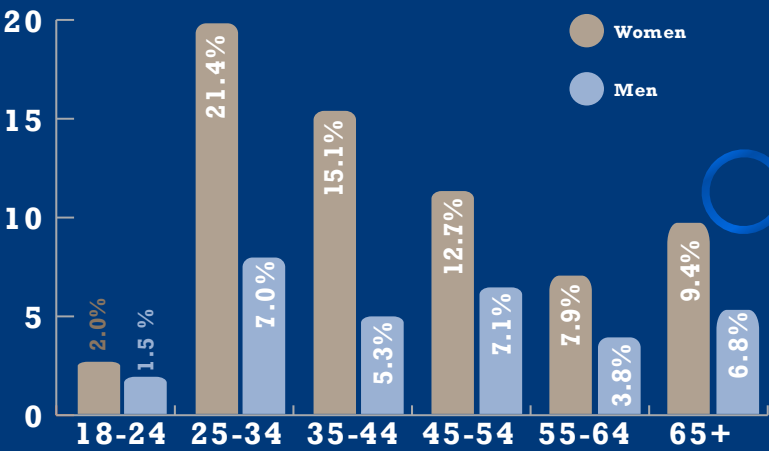
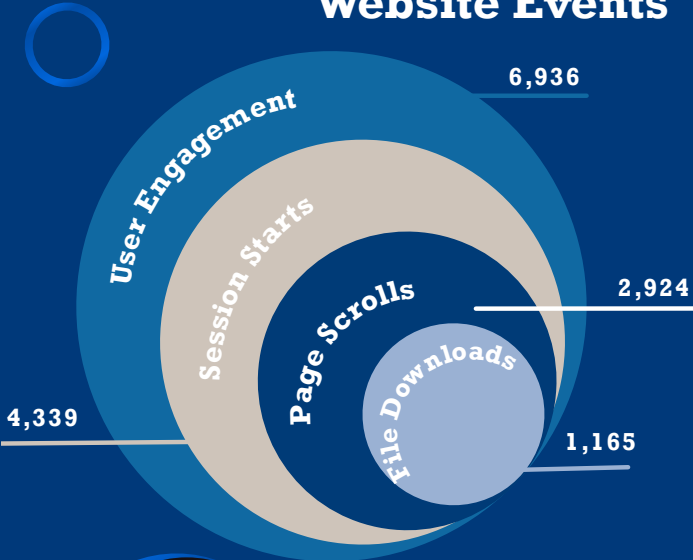
In line with our commitment to maximizing revenue streams, one of the primary focuses of our communications department is to leverage advertisement opportunities effectively. This year, we set a goal to increase revenue by 25% through our HEARHear Magazine, a goal which we successfully achieved.

The HEARHear Magazine serves as a multifaceted tool, not only promoting our programs and providing valuable information about hearing loss and accessibility but also playing a significant role in our fundraising efforts. Thanks to our in-depth knowledge of demographics and social media numbers, we were able to retain one of our biggest advertisers for our magazine and a few potential new leads for 2024-25.

Our magazine serves as a vital tool in connecting with our senior community, who prefer physical copies and aren't entirely tech-savvy. It plays a pivotal role in retaining our membership, facilitating the renewal of 50-70% annually. Additionally, it's a significant driver of our fundraising efforts, generating 50% of our annual general donations through the annual appeal sent with the magazine to all members, professional members, donors, sponsors, and partners.

Overall, 2023 was a year of significant impact on our community. The Communications Department serves as a vital bridge between our programs team, administrative affairs, staff, and our community. Each day, the department works diligently to support them through the development of resources such as the brochures, banners, training manuals, marketing materials for Hear Quebec, ensuring their messages reach the intended audiences and promoting Hear Quebec's mission.

## Website Events



## Social Media Demographics



# Finance

By: Connor Quinn



## Revenue

Hear Quebec's revenue increased in 2023-24 by 50% over the previous year – from 276,000 to 414,000 in overall revenue. This represents the highest revenue level in the organization's history.

That result is largely due to the organizations' focus on accessibility support for people with hearing loss, and the one-time grant funds it received for executing accessibility-related activities throughout the year. The City of Montreal and the federal government (via the Canada Community Services Recovery Fund) provided Hear Quebec with 35,000 and 100,000 in new one-time revenue respectively for programs related to supporting the increase of accessibility for those with hearing loss.

In addition to this, Hear Quebec received a new 11,000 revenue stream from an Emploi Quebec grant to help subsidize overhead related to staffing, and an increase of 20,000 from the Minister of Health and Social Services over last year's allocation, thus increasing that grant revenue from 196,000 in 2022-23 to 216K in 2023-24. The latter source of revenue remains the organization's most important and reliable revenue source given it is a material amount (52% of our revenue this year), and an annual grant.

The overall expenses of Hear Quebec grew by 65,000 in 2023-24. Almost all of that increase is related to

overhead required to meet the accessibility grant obligations, most notably, hiring new employees or shifting employment status of existing employees to support the accessibility programs. For example, the application for the 100,000 federal grant included a plan to hire an accessibility coordinator. All other increases are consistent with annual overhead increases related to inflation.

## Profit/Deficit

The organization enjoyed a 39,000 profit this past year, however it is important to note that this is largely due to unspent grant funds that were not used in 2023-24 for accessibility activities that are scheduled in this current year. Therefore, the profit is a result of timing because we received all the grant revenue on 2023-24 for activities that take place on both 2023-24 and in 2024-25.

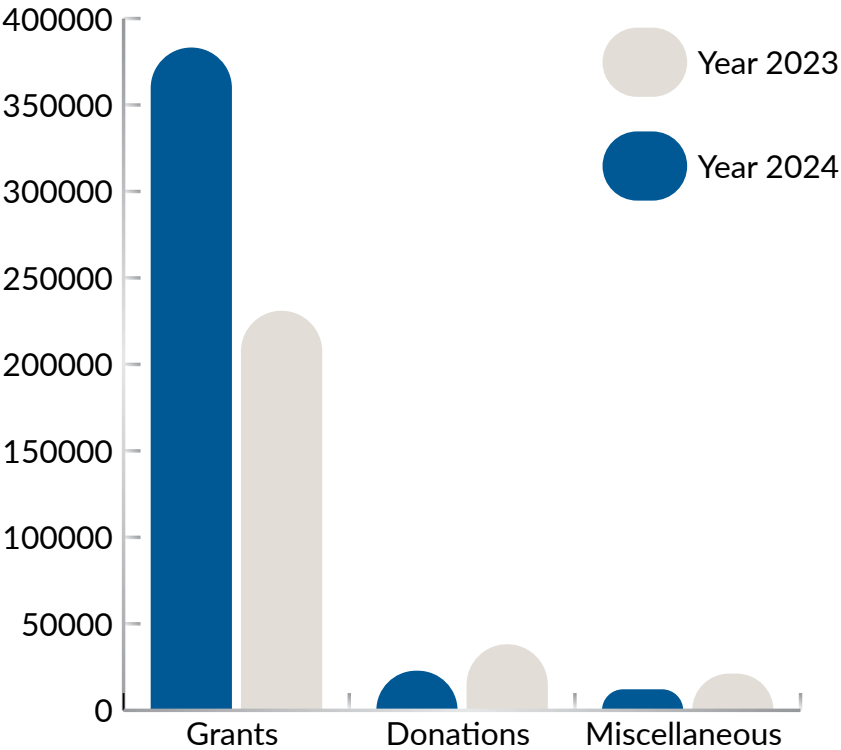
## Balance Sheet

The balance sheet is healthy: lots of cash, low risk accounts receivables, and normal levels of accounts payable. What is important to note is that of the cash on hand, \$62,500 is restricted and earmarked for a potential headquarters relocation (40,000), for accessibility and programs (10,000), for various infrastructure required at the office (8,000), and for the Bonnycastle Scholarship (4,500). The Board decided to rename the relocation funding to emergency fund. This is the suggested wording for the grant from the Ministry of Health and Social Services.

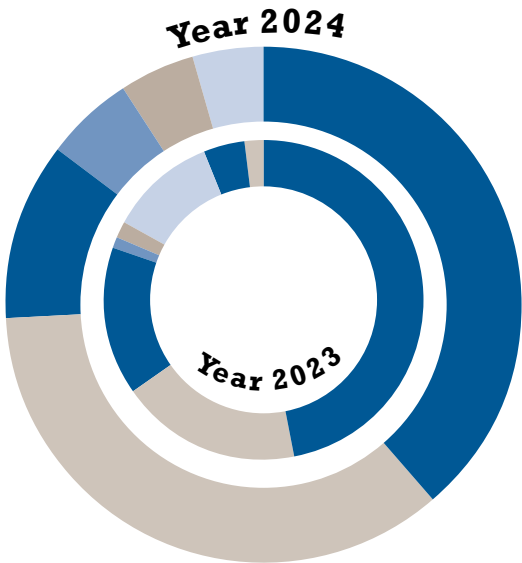
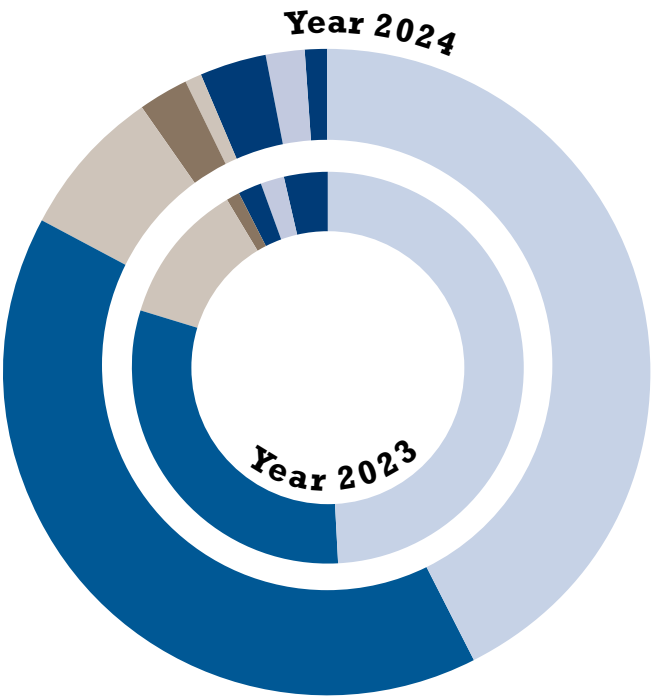


# Grants

- Minister of Health and Social Services
  - ◊ CCSMTL PSOC-Mission globale
- Quebec Emploi
- Employment and Social Development Canada Community Services Recovery Fund
- Canada Summer Jobs wage subsidy
- City of Montreal
- Peer Mentoring (Audition Quebec)



# Expenses



- Printing
- Programs
- Program Salaries
- Admin Salaries
- Fundrasing
- Amortization
- Professional fees
- Communications
- Membership dues
- Postage
- Bank charges
- Misc
- Taxes permits
- CRM
- Travel
- Insurance



# Fundraising

By: Salvatore Castellano &

Heidy Wager



**T**his year, we observed the relaunch of our fundraising committee in the autumn. We would like to thank Emily Ranger-Lepage, Salvatore Castellano, Heidy and Vathana for their hard work and dedication to this committee.

We developed and approved a new action for 2023-2025. Our goals and objective were;

## **Annually apply for grants and diversify our funding sources:**

Last year represented a significant milestone for us, as we secured an additional \$135,000 in new revenue from 2 new funders, resulting in the largest influx of grant money to date. This substantial increase had a profound impact on the programs and services we offer, allowing us to **innovate** and introduce two new programs: Include **ME** and Consult **ME**. Furthermore, we received an additional **\$21,000** from the Ministry of Health and Social Services (PSOC) constituting **≈ 37.68%** increase from our last year's grant.

## **Increase the amount of new donors in each donor category:**

Increasing the number of donors is vital for financial stability, sustainability, and growth, diversifying revenue streams, fostering community engagement, and enabling expansion. This year, our total donors reached **164, with 20 new donors** and an additional monthly donor, marking a total growth of approximately **13.89%**. This represents 67% of our donations come from seniors, indicating their strong support for our cause. Additionally, 18% of donations are from adults, showing a diverse

range of supporters. However, there's potential for growth in engaging young adults, as they currently contribute 1.7% of our donations.

## **We conducted three official campaigns this year:**

### **Annual Appeals (General Donations):**

In 2023, we raised \$10,500, which **decreased slightly to \$9,733 in this present year**. Despite the decrease in donations, we saw an increase in the number of donors, suggesting that individual donors may have contributed slightly less this year. A 33% drop in donations over the last three years, possibly due to current economic conditions and this has been witnessed across the non for profit sector.

### **Access Comedy - Accessibility Campaign:**

While it may seem that our fundraising **decreased significantly from \$14,000** in 2022 to \$4,398 in 2023, it's essential to understand that this apparent loss is primarily attributed to reduced expenses incurred during the latter year due to partnerships. In reality, the actual funds raised remained nearly consistent, suggesting a successful campaign despite the lower reported amount. By partnering with OFF JFL, City of Montreal, and the Montreal Oral School for the Deaf, we expanded our accessibility awareness efforts, broadened our reach, and increased awareness of our organization. These partnerships also created opportunities for potential funding and collaborations, furthering our mission to enhance accessibility and support for individuals with hearing loss.

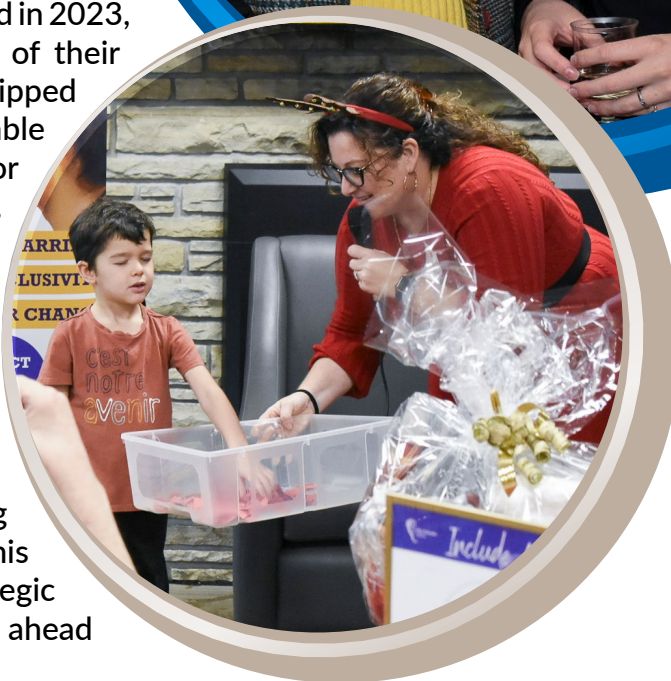


### End of Year Campaign:

In 2022, we raised \$5,391, which significantly **increased to \$7,911** in 2023. This increase is attributed to the initiation of the board members' annual contribution program. Each board member was trained and supported to raise peer-to-peer funds, resulting in a substantial boost in contributions.

### Involve and engage Board members in fundraising initiatives annually:

In the fall, we held a full-day training session for our board and staff, in partnership with COCo, centered on "Getting Curious about Fundraising." During this training, board members committed to raising a minimum of \$500 from their networks. The board collectively aimed to raise \$3,500, and in 2023, they successfully **raised \$2,700**, just shy of their target for the first year. The training equipped both the Board and staff with valuable insights, strategies, and best practices for effective fundraising campaign mapping, empowering them to engage and solicit funds more effectively. The second training, held in the winter, initiated discussions on the opportunities and challenges anticipated in the upcoming fiscal year. Topics included planning for our 45th anniversary, analyzing funding and donor trends for 2024-25, and considering the impact of economic conditions. This session provided valuable insights and strategic planning discussions to navigate the year ahead effectively.





# Commitment, Engagement & Partnership

## Overwhelming Gratitude for Everyone's Support



Among our valued partners, the Lethbridge-Layton-Mackay Rehabilitation Centre has been instrumental for over 40 years, providing support and essential spaces for our programs, especially for our Include **ME** program.

Government of Canada's Community Services Recovery Fund and City of Montreal Montréal Fonds dédié aux projets de renforcement de capacités en accessibilité universelle have been crucial in enabling us to expand our reach, including through the New Consult **ME** program. For the Ministry of Health and social services for the ongoing support and dedication to enabling us to enhance our mission.

Excitingly, we're continuing our partnership with the Montreal Oral School for the Deaf on a new youth mentoring initiative, enriching our services even further.

Moving forward, we're committed to fostering more collaborations with local businesses, partners, specifically targeting partnerships with senior residences, city departments, and municipal entities. We aim to create inclusive environments for those with hearing loss.



## Funders

Canada Summer Jobs  
Emploi Québec  
Ministère de la santé et  
des services sociaux  
Government of Canada's  
Community Services  
Recovery Fund- Centraide  
of Greater Montreal  
City of Montreal Montréal Fonds  
dédié aux projets de renforcement de  
capacités en accessibilité universelle  
Innoweave McConnell Foundation

## Sponsors

Les Centres Masliah

## Advertisers

Audiologie Centre-Ouest Inc.  
Groupe Forget, Audioprothésistes  
Les Centres Masliah  
St Patrick's Sqaure  
The Honourable **Marc Garneau** - Member of  
Parliament  
OPHQ (Office des personnes handicapées du  
Québec)  
Manoir Westmount

## Partners

Audition Québec  
TranXition  
Better Hearing Solutions  
The Canadian Hearing Society  
The Canadian Hard of Hearing Association  
CIUSSS du Centre-Sud-de-l'Île-de-Montréal  
Lethbridge-Layton-Mackay Rehabilitation Centre

## Educational Institutional Partners

Montreal Oral School for the Deaf  
Access Centre for Students with Disabilities  
Dawson College – Social Service & CRLT Programs  
Enable Montreal (Concordia)  
McGill University Office for Students with  
Disabilities  
Université de Montréal – École d'orthophonie et  
d'audiologie  
Marianopolis College: AccessAbility Centre



Vanier College Special Care Counseling  
John Abbot College: Access Centre

## Tables and Community Collaborators

NDG Community Council  
NDG Seniors Table  
Quebec Community Groups Network  
REQIS-Réseau Québécois pour l'Inclusion Sociale  
des personnes sourdes et malentendantes  
Dephy-Le regroupement des organismes en  
déficience physique de l'île de Montréal  
Dephy  
One Voice

## In Kind Sponsors

DJ Blaster  
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Bofinger BBQ  
Burger de Ville  
Greenz Restaurant  
Le Mexiquois Restaurant  
Souvlaki George  
Restaurant Momesso  
Pigeon Cafe



# Donors

Your generous donation is instrumental in transforming the lives of individuals with hearing loss through our programs. Your support ensures that our members have access to essential resources, support services, and community initiatives that empower them to thrive. With your contribution, we can continue providing

invaluable assistance, fostering connection, and enhancing the well-being of those we serve. Thank you for making a tangible difference in the lives of our members and for making a huge difference in the greater community with accessibility programs you support. Your reach goes farther than just our members.

**Ps: Please forgive us if we omitted or misspelled your name.**



Abby

Stonehouse | Académie De Mu-

sique De LaSalle Inc. | Adam Basch-Tetreault |

Allan Dakin | Alvin Goldman | Anas Alhelaly | Andrea

Lepore | Andree Bouchard | Angelo De Angelis | Angie Cho | Anita

Charmaine McDonald | Anna Di Tomaso | Anne Barkman | Arianne Auger |

Arlene Shulman | Ashanta Farrington | Ashley Gaujean | Ashley Mayoff | Audiol-

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Bernard Donato | Betsy Kremmel | Bill Green | Boris Stefancic | Brian Darling | Bridget

Polidoro | Caesar (Tom) Donlan | Carmen King | Carol Chopra | Carol Norman | Carol Water-

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Stefancic | Jacques Fortier | Jacques LeBouc | James Boyce | Janet McConnell | Jean Nicolas (Nick) Laperle | Jill

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